

## REMARKS

### Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

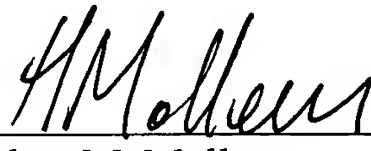
The Examiner has rejected claims 1-8 and 13-17 under 35 USC 102(b) as unpatentable over Besser et al. (6,444,567). The Examiner has rejected claims 10-12 under 35 USC 102(b) as unpatentable over Besser et al. (6,444,567). The Examiner has rejected claims 10-12 under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Besser et al. (6,444,567) in view of the following remark. The Applicants respectfully traverse. The cited reference fails to teach or render obvious each of the elements of the Applicants' claimed invention. In particular, Besser fails to teach the element of independent claim 1 of "depositing a metal more noble than copper from an aqueous solution by immersion plating." In contrast, Besser teaches "blanket depositing, as by a physical vapor deposition (PVD), e.g., sputtering, ion plating, or vacuum evaporation, at least one layer comprising at least one alloying element...." (Col. 6 lines 32 – 35.) Besser also fails to teach the element of independent claim 11 of "depositing silver on the conductive path." In contrast, Besser teaches "at least one alloying element selected from the group consisting of: tin (Sn), boron (B), magnesium (Mg), carbon (C), palladium (Pd), cobalt (Co), nickel (Ni) and cadmium (Cd)...." (Col. 6 lines 36 – 38.) Additionally, Besser fails to teach the element of independent claim 27 of "removing an oxide from the conductive path by etching the conductive path with a medium having a mildly acidic or mildly basic solution." In contrast, Besser teaches removing an oxide with a plasma etch in Col. 7 lines 50 – 53: "...exposing the upper surface of the at least one Cu metal feature to a reducing agent or atmosphere, e.g., a hydrogen plasma, for reducing any copper oxide present thereat...." Therefore, the Applicants' respectfully submit that the independent claims 1, 11, and 27 and the claims that depend upon and incorporate the limitations of the independent claims 1, 11, and 27, are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Besser.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a)(3), applicant(s) hereby request and authorize the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to (1) treat any concurrent or future reply that requires a petition for extension of time as incorporating a petition for extension of time for the appropriate length of time and (2) charge all required fees, including extension of time fees and fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 and 1.17, to Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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